

1164  
American Board of Commissioners for  
Foreign Missions.

PAM.  
JAPAN

# THE JAPAN MISSION.

1869-1895.

A CONDENSED SKETCH.

By Rev. JAMES H. PETTEE.

---

New and Revised Edition.

---

BOSTON:  
Printed for the American Board.  
1895.

## CONDENSED SKETCH OF THE JAPAN MISSION.

THIS island empire with its extensive coastline of 17,575 miles is about the size of California, minus her northeast county of Modoc. That is, it contains 155,962 square miles. The country is something the shape and exactly the size of Michigan, Indiana, and Kentucky combined, but contains six times the population of this triad of American States.

It is a trifle less than nineteen times the size of Massachusetts, with a little more than nineteen times her population. Its range of latitude is that from southern Florida to northern Newfoundland. Its range of longitude equals that from Boston to Denver. Within its boundaries are six cities, each containing over 100,000 people, while its whole population exceeds 43,000,000.

**CLIMATE AND PRODUCTS.**— The islands are of volcanic origin and very mountainous. Several of the active volcanoes are easily climbed, and together with the peerless Fuji, which in art as in nature is justly the pride of the land, are frequent resorts of pilgrims, it being considered an act of special virtue to worship the rising sun from the pinnacle of some high mountain. In former times women were not allowed on the

upper slopes of sacred Fuji. Eruptions are not infrequent, that of Bandai-zan in 1888 resulting in the loss of 461 lives, while earthquakes are so common, especially in the eastern-central section of the country, as to pass unnoticed unless exceptionally severe. The most destructive earthquake of recent years occurred on the morning of October 28, 1891. Nearly 8,000 persons lost their lives, 90,000 houses were destroyed, and so much damage wrought that aside from a vast amount of private charity, the government spent nearly \$4,000,000 in repairing public works and restoring industries in the afflicted region. Floods, typhoons, and infectious diseases also ravage portions of the land nearly every year. The warm current on the east coast makes the summer a wet season and adds greatly to the picturesque beauty and sticky discomfort of that trying season.

Rice culture is the chief industry of the land, 200,000,000 bushels being raised yearly. There is a perfect system of terracing and irrigation, dating back for its beginning to the time of Christ. Of wheat, 17,000,000 bushels are raised and of tea, 70,000,000 pounds. Millet, sorghum, beans, buckwheat, potatoes, rapeseed, cotton, flax, indigo, and tobacco are abundantly grown. Usually two crops are harvested each year. Two hundred varieties of fish, nearly all from salt water, supply the low stands which still serve the Japanese as tables. Ducks, pheasants, apes, badgers, hares, and bears also serve for food. The consumption of beef is yearly

increasing and large quantities of this and other eatables are canned for preservation. Until recently milk was used only as a medicine, and butter not at all. Tea, tobacco, and *saké* (rice wine) are consumed in large quantities, and drunkenness is very common, though less boisterous than in Western lands. One seventh of the rice goes through a distillery. The commonest fruits are oranges, persimmons, *biwa*, pears, grapes, apricots, and peaches. Small fruits, grafted fruits, and blooded stock are being introduced by the government on its model farms, and to a limited extent by private enterprise.

Silk is also a product of great value, over 9,000,000 pounds of the raw article being manufactured yearly. Mining, one of the oldest industries of the country, has undergone great improvements during recent years, and the output of all common minerals is very large, coal and copper taking the lead. Cotton spinning flourishes, a large number of factories having been opened within the past five years. Among her older industries for which Japan has long been noted, may be mentioned the manufacture of porcelain and faïence, bronze utensils and lacquer ware.

THE PEOPLE.—The origin of the Japanese is an unsettled question. Scientific guesswork up to date pronounces them of Mongolian descent, derived from two streams of immigration passing through Korea, spreading northward and eastward, and gradually subduing the Ainu

(who are not Mongolians) and other aborigines of the country. Although there are no certain traces of early Malayan immigration, many scholars believe in a mixed origin that includes this southern people. It is an interesting fact that recent Japanese scholars have discovered close resemblances between Shintōism, the pure native cult, and ancient Judaism, while one Scotchman years ago published a little book in which he essayed to prove the Japanese were derived from the lost tribes of Israel.

The people are small of stature, the average man attaining about the same height as the average European woman. They develop early and are shortlived, though the number of very old people is fairly high. They have less high-strung nerves than Europeans; hence they endure pain more calmly and meet death with comparative indifference. This last is not entirely a physical characteristic, but is due in part to their religious beliefs. Boys, young men, and women do the hard work, and the dead line is crossed at forty. Formerly women blackened their teeth and shaved off their eyebrows at marriage. They do not bind their feet. Women are subject to their fathers, husbands, and eldest sons, but have more freedom and are better educated than in other Oriental countries and than formerly in Japan. The Japanese are intelligent, polite, cheerful, cleanly, cautious, curious, industrious, imitative, kind-hearted, honorable, intensely patriotic, and fairly persevering. They are inclined to be fickle, deceptive, improvident,

visionary, suspicious, and somewhat superstitious and sensual. Impurity of life is an open and common vice. There is one divorce to every three marriages. Nine tenths of the people are hopelessly in debt. Children are very obedient. Corporal punishment is almost unknown.

Their old civilization is that of the Chinese, but they possess a temperament that welcomes the new. They are fond of surprises, but their changes are usually in the line of progress.

**GOVERNMENT.**—In theory the Emperor—heaven-descended, absolute, infallible—has always been the head and fountain of all power. Practically this power has been wielded usually in his name by the members of some ambitious family, which has managed to possess itself of supreme influence over the affairs of State. Even since the revolution of 1868, whose avowed object was to restore the Emperor to his pristine absolutism, a large share of the reality of power has lain with the two great clans of Satsuma and Chōshū. On the eleventh day of February, 1889, amid the rejoicings of the nation, a constitution was proclaimed from the throne, thus placing Japan in line with the liberal governments of the Western world. By this constitution liberty of conscience, speech, and association is guaranteed to the people. The present Emperor is Mutsuhito, who was born November 3, 1852, and is according to Japanese reckoning the one hundred and twenty-third in an unbroken line of

rulers since Jimmu Tenno, a very mythical personage who is supposed to have founded the dynasty in 660 B.C. Authentic history, however, does not antedate the fifth century of the Christian era. The administration at present is divided into ten departments, the heads of nine of which form the Emperor's Cabinet. In the national elective system the whole country is divided into 257 electoral districts, represented by 300 Deputies in the House of Commons. Owing to a restrictive property qualification, there are less than 500,000 legal voters, or 12 to every 1,000 of the population.

FOREIGN RELATIONS.—From the thirteenth to the sixteenth century Japan was open to the scanty commerce of those times. Then, through distrust of the Roman Catholics, the country was sealed up. Commodore Perry reopened it in 1854. The treaties now in force, except those with Portugal, Mexico, and Hawaii, were made in 1858 and the few following years. These treaties are exceedingly unjust to the enlightened Japan of to-day. The main points in dispute are the "favored nation clause," which allows any nation to claim privileges from Japan granted to any other nation, extra-territorial jurisdiction, customs revenues, and the opening of the country for trade and residence. But seven cities are now thus open. The recent treaty made with Great Britain completely breaks the tyranny of the past and will result in the abolition of extra-territorial jurisdiction after

five years, and complete tariff autonomy twelve years later. It is confidently expected that other nations will speedily revise their musty treaties with this most progressive nation of the Orient.

There are 10,000 foreigners residing in Japan, one half of them being Chinese. To all except these latter she now grants traveling passports good for one year throughout her whole domain. Desiring to extend her own prestige, assure the independence of Korea, and break up forever the debilitating influence of China in the far East, she formally declared war against her huge enemy in the summer of 1894. By an unbroken series of brilliant victories, the Chinese troops have been driven out of Korea and "On to Peking!" is the watchword of Japan's valiant army as this sketch goes to press. The nation sanctions the war with complete unanimity, and is ready to make vast sacrifices that China may be humbled and the whole Orient opened to the most progressive influences of this enterprising age. In her treatment of Chinese peasants and prisoners and her general conduct of the war, Japanese officials purpose to meet the highest demands of international ethics.

**RECENT CHANGES.** — The Emperor has come out from his seclusion, meets his councilors, makes tours through the country, is seen by common people, even dines with his merchants who, as a class, stood lowest in the oldtime social scale. Two thousand miles of railway, steamship lines, a telegraph business that

amounts to \$50,000 a day, a complete post-office department embracing postal-order and parcels delivery, and bank systems, lighthouses, telephones, steam-mills with complicated machinery, a new civil and criminal code based on that of France, a well-equipped army and navy, a fine mint, official observance of the Sabbath, adoption of the Christian calendar, and complete religious freedom — these are the striking features of New Japan. She also has one university with affiliated colleges, and in all 30,662 schools, with 3,500,000 students — two twenty-fifths of her whole population. English is taught in some of the schools, and will be in all as soon as teachers can be prepared for the work.

The first newspaper published in Japan dates from the closing years of the Tokugawa administration. In the first year of the Meiji era (1868) an official gazette appeared, and thereafter newspaper enterprise received a great impetus. Aside from half a dozen great dailies that go far toward molding as well as reflecting public opinion, there are several hundred journals and periodicals of all grades of worth circulating through the empire.

Japan has sent hundreds of special missions to Europe and America to study the various arts and sciences calculated to develop material civilization. Formerly she did little in the line of public benevolence, and private charity was restricted to one's own family or clan. But now public hospitals, insane asylums, homes for foundlings, etc., are springing up in many

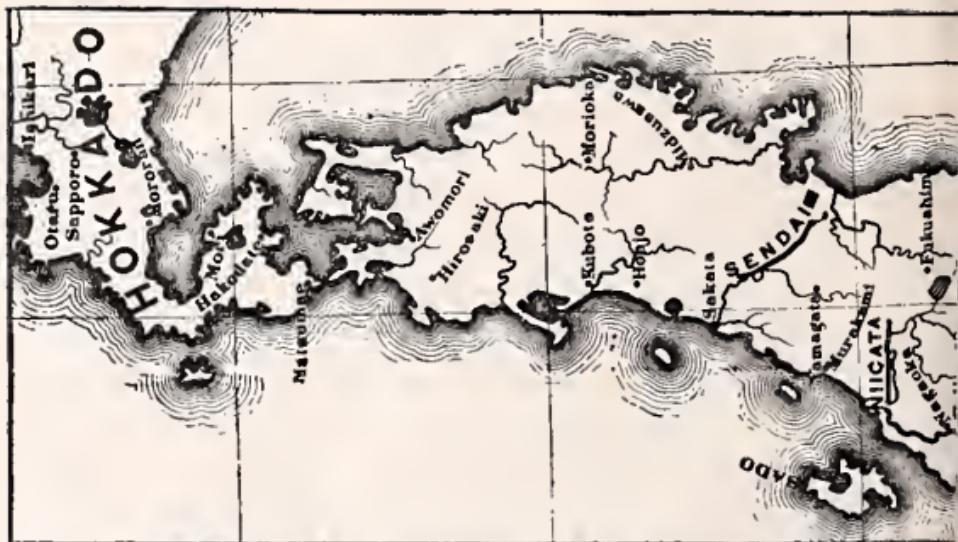
places. Charity bazaars, concerts, and theatra-  
cals are quite the fashion. The Red Cross  
Society, with a prince of royal descent as its  
president, is very flourishing, being especially  
active in connection with the present war.  
Twenty-three thousand dollars has come into its  
treasury during the past five months. The  
Emperor and Empress are always prompt and  
generous in extending aid to sufferers from great  
natural calamities, and their example is followed  
by multitudes of others.

Japan's foreign commerce amounts annually  
to \$130,000,000, against less than one quarter  
of one million in 1850.

During the past ten years 20,000 laborers  
have emigrated to Hawaii under a contract to  
work on sugar plantations. They send home  
their surplus earnings. On October 17, 1894,  
498 emigrants sailed from Kōbe to establish a  
Japanese colony on the French West Indian  
island of Guadalupe, and other colonies have  
been established in Mexico, the Philippine  
Islands, and elsewhere.

**NATIVE RELIGIONS.**—Shintō, which means  
literally “the way of the gods,” is the name  
given to the mythology and vague ancestor and  
nature worship which preceded the introduction  
of Buddhism into Japan, and which survives to  
the present day in a somewhat modified form.  
It is hardly entitled to the name of a religion,  
as it has no set of dogmas, no sacred book, and  
no moral code. It has, however 8,000,000 gods,







# JAPAN.

Published by the ABCFM.

1 Sonnenberg St Boston.

1895.



with the sun-goddess at their head, 56,500 shrines or temples, some of which are maintained out of public moneys, and the attendance of certain officials is required from time to time at ceremonies of a half-religious, half-courtly nature. Follow your natural impulses, and reverence the Emperor seem to be its leading principles. Some of its sects profess to heal the sick by the agency of prayer, and thus retain a firm hold on large classes of the people.

Buddhism was introduced from Korea, A.D. 552. There are at present ten different sects, with many subdivisions, 72,000 temples, 90,000 monks and nuns, and a vast number of believers whose zeal needs only an occasion to be vividly shown.

With great differences, which in some matters are contradictions, Japanese Buddhism in its trend is atheistic, idolatrous, teaches the transmigration of souls, the subjection of woman (her only hope of heaven being to be reborn as a man), salvation by personal culture or through the merits of Amida, and Nirvana, or a state of passive rest as the goal of existence. Buddhist priests have no living faith in what they teach; their morals are very low, and the religion has almost no appreciable moral power over the people.

Confucian morals, whose cornerstone is submission to parents and political rulers, are taught in the schools, and the system is theoretically believed by many intelligent Japanese. For 250 years, beginning with the early part of

the seventeenth century, the whole intellect of the country was molded by Confucian ideas, and notwithstanding the social cataclysm of the last thirty years, which has overwhelmed all Japanese institutions, it still retains a strong hold on the thinking men of Japan, the reason being that it has to do solely with ceremonies and duties (rites and rights) of the present life, and not with speculations concerning the future.

**TENRIKYO.** — The word means “Heavenly Wisdom Sect.” It is a new faith, no notice of which has as yet found its way into encyclopædias or histories. Originally promulgated 100 years ago by a woman, as a sect of Shintō, it has during the past ten years become thoroughly eclectic, and achieved a marvelous popularity, now numbering at least 1,000,000 followers, entirely among the common people. Its morality is of a very high order, and many of its sermons are simply developments of Christ’s Sermon on the Mount. It professes to heal by the power of prayer, and worships the Ruler of the Universe. Buddhists oppose it as strongly as they do Christianity, and its further development will be watched with great interest, for a few are wondering if it is not to prove a stepping-stone to the fuller, richer truth of Christ’s gospel.

**ROMAN CATHOLICISM IN JAPAN.** — The Jesuits entered Japan in 1549. The preceding year a Japanese fugitive named Anjiro met Saint Francis Xavier in India, and together with his

two servants was baptized later at Goa. Then Xavier formed the design of evangelizing Japan. He arrived at Kagoshima, August 15, 1549, where he was received with distinguished courtesy by the prince and forthwith began to preach the gospel. After a time some of the *daimios* became Catholics and compelled their subjects, to the number of more than half a million, to embrace the new faith. In 1587 the Tycoon Hideyoshi, fearing lest Japan should become the slave of Spain and Portugal, ordered the banishment of the missionaries. Many bloody battles followed. In 1637 the Christians finally surrendered. Thirty-seven thousand of them were massacred. Secret believers, however, have existed ever since. In 1864 hundreds of such were found in the villages around Nagasaki. There are now 47,000 adherents to the Church of Rome, together with 185 European and 360 native priests, nuns, and catechists.

The Orthodox Russian Church opened a mission in Japan in 1870. It has been exceedingly fortunate in possessing as its head and inspiring genius, Bishop Nicolai, a man of rare gifts and most charming personality. The Russian Cathedral in Tōkyō is by far the finest ecclesiastical edifice in the country, and the chanting of the service on Saturday evening is one of the choice attractions of the capital, aside from its liturgical and religious import. Throughout the whole country this mission contains two foreign and 190 native preachers and some 22,000 enrolled members.

PROTESTANT MISSIONS.—These cover a period of nearly thirty-six years. Rev. J. Liggins and Rev. C. M. Williams (late bishop of Japan), members of the China Mission of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States, were transferred to Japan in 1859, Mr. Liggins reaching Nagasaki on May 2. In the fall of the same year representatives of the Presbyterian and Reformed churches in America reached the country. To-day there are about 600 missionaries, including wives and self-supporting workers, representing some thirty-eight different societies. So great was the distrust of foreigners, and especially of Christianity, that at the end of five years there was but *one* baptized Japanese, and at the end of twelve years but ten. The first church was organized in Yokohama, March 10, 1872, and consisted of eleven members. There are now at least 40,000 baptized Protestant Christians, gathered into 400 churches. We find independent churches, Home Missionary Societies, Young Men's Christian Associations, Chautauqua Circles, Young People's Societies of Christian Endeavor, and all forms of church machinery. Of high-grade Christian schools there are 20 for boys, with 1,600 students, and 50 for girls, with 2,600 pupils. Also at least 100 night, industrial, or other special schools or classes with over 5,000 students. There are 12 orphan asylums under Protestant and 17 under Roman Catholic influences. Mr. Ishii's orphan asylum at Okayama, which is largely in imitation of George Muller's

institution at Bristol, England, is the largest, most widely known and effectively conducted of the whole number.

There are two leper hospitals, and two asylums for the aged, equally divided between Catholics and Protestants, four Christian asylums for the blind and the deaf, a special mission for Railway employees, another for policemen, yet another for the Loochoo Islanders, and also one among the Ainu, the mild-mannered aborigines of northern Japan; also, work for convicts in four great prisons of Hokkaido.

Among those high in position who are Protestant Christians may be mentioned the Chief Justice of the realm, the Vice-President of the House of Commons, at least a dozen other members of the two houses, and two secretaries of Cabinet ministers.

**AMERICAN BOARD MISSION.** — The main mission was commenced in 1869 in Central Japan, Rev. D. C. Greene and wife arriving at Yokohama November 30 of that year. It has now eight principal stations, Kōbe, Osaka, Kyōto, Okayama, and Tottori on the main island (Tsu has recently been abandoned as a resident station), Matsuyama on the island of Shikoku, and Kumamoto and Miyazaki on the large southern island of Kiushiu.

The North Japan Mission was begun in 1883 at Niigata on the northwest coast, near the thirty-eighth parallel of latitude. This is a city of 50,000 inhabitants, and the only open port

on the whole west coast. The whole region is some ten years behind the eastern coast. Buddhism, bigotry, and licentiousness abound. Christianity makes slow progress. But the people possess a native force of character that promises large and permanent results in the near future. The city of Sendai is still farther to the north but near the eastern coast. Maebashi in the interior, midway between the other two, lies in the centre of a great silk-producing region. Tōkyō, the capital, is the only other city occupied by missionaries, though a station is planned for at Sapporo in the great northern island of Hokkaido.

These two missions in Japan are now united and their work and statistics are combined in this sketch. During the twenty-five years since 1869 the joint mission has enrolled among its foreign workers 41 married and 6 single men, 44 wives and 47 single women, a grand total of 138 laborers. The sainted Dr. Neesima was also for fifteen years a corresponding member of the mission. The present number is 27 men and 57 women.

In 1871, Y. Ichikawa, a teacher of one of the missionaries, was arrested with his wife at dead of night and thrown into prison on suspicion of being a Christian. He died in prison in November, 1872. The wife was soon after released.

Joseph Neesima and Paul Sawayama, after completing their education in America, returned to Japan about 1874; one to establish a Christian school, the other to become an eminently successful pastor.

The Kyōto Training School, now called Doshisha, was opened in 1876. More than thirty of its students came from Captain Janes's school in Kumamoto, where, through the influence of their foreign teacher and his most estimable wife, they had become Christians. Forty students in the Kumamoto School pledged their lives to Christ and Japan; fifteen of them formed the first graduating class (1879) at the Kōyto School. Many of the number are to-day leaders in Christian work. The present number of students in Doshisha is 446; in the six girls' schools, 450, and in the Bible-women's School at Kōbe, 30.

The first church connected with the mission was organized in Kōbe, April 19, 1874, with eleven members. There are now some eighty such churches, with a membership of over 12,000. Forty-three of these churches are self-supporting and contribute to the native Home Missionary Society.

Of Japanese workers there are to-day 30 pastors (44 ordained men in all), 55 acting pastors, 60 evangelists and Bible-women, and at least 100 school or language teachers. The Christians contribute over \$25,000 a year for various church and charity objects. Their church building property is valued at some \$70,000. Together with the mission they also sustain two hospitals, two dispensaries, two kindergartens, one nurses' training school, several orphanages, and a large number of night schools and other philanthropic enterprises, in addition to Dōshisha

and other schools referred to above. Of these special mention should be made of Kōbe College, a well-equipped high-grade institution for girls, generously aided by the Woman's Board of the Interior.

The work has become so complex, and the Japanese people, though homogeneous as a nation, are in such different stages of advancement that it is difficult briefly to sum up the situation. There remains room for but the following observations: —

In addition to the high-grade work of several mission schools in Japan, one can count up off-hand the names of twenty-five men and women, all living but two, who have received more or less of an education abroad. With very few exceptions, these are or have been prominent preachers or teachers among the Kumi-ai churches and schools associated therewith. Other denominations furnish a similar report. This force of highly educated, broad-minded leaders is being constantly enlarged, and reduces, not proportionally but to a marked degree, the need for foreign workers. Moreover the rising self-consciousness of the nation, together with its noble, albeit visionary, idea of national destiny as the revolutionizer of the Orient, seems to demand that the leadership and main responsibility for Christian as for all other kinds of service shall be transferred more and more to Japanese hands, heads, and hearts.

On the other hand, the mass of the Japanese people are as yet hardly touched by the gospel,

except indirectly. Moreover, the highly intellectual habits of many Christian workers, together with that striking national ambition so broad as to embrace not merely the Orient, but a civilized Occident, leads to impatience of details and that humble, methodical service by which according to Scripture the coming of the Kingdom is most surely hastened. Missionaries from countries where Christianity has had a longer reign and fuller development are likewise needed to give steady balance and long-sustained movement to impetuous ardor.

These considerations, together with the evident destiny of Japan as the leader and teacher of the far East, make the generous treatment of her at this critical stage in the Orient's awakening the urgent duty and royal privilege of Christian churches and their nations.

No new missions should be established here. If possible, the younger and smaller ones should unite with those longer on the ground, while these in turn should, and in the main do, regard all the requirements of Christian comity.

It is always unsafe to forecast events in such a volcanic land, but probably the Japan Mission will never again ask for a large increase of its foreign force. A few more picked men and choice women for special places will be called for, but the whole number is more likely to decrease than increase.

Humanly speaking the Christian churches in Japan cannot possibly do, promptly and effectively, the work laid upon them in the Providence

of God. They should be sustained most loyally by the prayers and gifts of all who believe in a God of nations, a God of peace and righteousness, a God of truth and love.

Japan's soldiers have already opened a way for her merchants and missionaries into Korea, and they will soon clear a highway through northern China. By her long training in an unnatural seclusion, by her restless temperament, by her boundless ambition, by her wide-eyed search through all the world for the best in material splendor, intellectual certitude, and spiritual attainment, by her present successes on land and sea, her aspirations for the Orient and evident divine calling therein, Japan is destined to be the missionary nation of the far East. Work for her to-day will be work for another and larger land to-morrow. She is "the soul of the far East," though the man who coined that expression has written a book on purpose to prove that she had no soul.

Let salvation, with all its full-orbed meaning, once come to this soul of the Orient, the Sunrise Land of the East, and the dense clouds of darkness will roll away forever from the troubled face of Asia.